

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Subregion: SOUTH **Counties:** TULARE AND FRESNO

Applicant: SEQUOIA PARKS FOUNDATION

Project Title: RANGERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Reference Number: SNC 070123

PROJECT SCOPE

The project will develop model curriculum and activities to address the topics of watersheds, air quality, and global climate change focused on the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Full implementation of the program will involve up to 22,500 students and 300 teachers annually in hands-on, experiential learning in Tulare and Fresno counties. This project is a collaborative effort of public/private partners to educate youth on the importance of protection and conservation of the diverse Sierra Nevada resources. While over \$60,000 in matching funds and in-kind services have been donated to this project to date by the Mt. Whitney Society, Whole Foods Market, the Monsanto Fund, and the National Park Services, it is anticipated that an additional \$300,000 will be received in 2008-09.

The goals of the overall program are:

- Beginning conversations with students in strategic Central California communities about protecting, valuing, and conserving Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks;
- Building intellectual capital through environmental education in Central California's underserved schools and communities;
- Motivating students and their communities to steward Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks as well as natural sites in their own communities.

SNC funding will be utilized to:

- Produce curriculum;
- Produce "Traveling Trunks" of visual aids and other materials for in classroom use by Park Rangers;
- Facilitate teacher workshops;
- Employ two seasonal Park Rangers to conduct educational outreach;
- Facilitate curriculum review and testing through observation, analysis, and evaluation;
- Complete and submit six month progress reports to SNC;
- Assist with transportation costs;
- Conduct a survey to gauge impact of project on knowledge and skills of participating teachers.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Employ program planner to facilitate curriculum review and testing	April 2008- April 2009
Produce curriculum and "Traveling Trunks"	April 2008 – June 2008
Conduct teacher workshops	June 2008 – September 2008
Employ park rangers to conduct educational outreach	June 2008 - August 2008
Complete and submit six month progress report to SNC	October 2008
Conduct teacher workshops	June 2009 – September 2009
Employ park rangers to conduct educational outreach	June 2009 - August 2009
Final Report/Final Payment Request	October, 2009

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Curriculum and Traveling Trunks production	\$14,000
Teacher workshops	4,500
2 Seasonal Park Rangers	29,500
Facilitate curriculum review & testing (Program Planner)	11,000
Transportation	6,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$65,000

Letters of Support:

None submitted

Recommendation:

Staff recommends authorization for this grant for the requested \$65,000.

Project Summary

Provide a summary (one-page maximum) that describes key elements of the project and states the total project cost.

Please type here: RANGERS IN THE CLASSROOM: Engaging a New Generation of Sierra Nevada Stewards

The Sequoia Parks Foundation is seeking a Category 2 Strategic Opportunity Grant in the amount of \$45,000 in support of Phase II & III implementation of "Rangers in the Classroom" (RITC), a multi-year environmental advocacy and educational outreach pilot program.

Through RITC, Park Rangers will visit Central Valley elementary schools, engaging students in standards-based activities that will increase their understanding of the Parks and the environmental ethic needed to preserve and protect the numerous lakes and rivers and their watersheds, associated lands, and other natural resources in this important area of the Sierra Nevada Region. RITC will focus on schools with high numbers of English-language learners and low-income students in Tulare and Fresno Counties. Planning for this new program began January 2007, with a goal to test it in select schools beginning in fall 2007, followed by phased implementation in 2008-2009. The total cost of the program is \$397,550. To date, RITC has received wide appeal and support from a broad base of program partners, stakeholders, and funders.

RITC will utilize best practices in environmental education, while serving as a model program designed specifically to meet the unique needs of Sierra Nevada communities. Exceptionally forward-thinking, RITC responds to a nexus of issues including:

- The need of youth and families, many of whom are newly arrived to the U.S. and have little understanding of national parks, to embrace the concept of shared public lands in order to best enjoy and protect Sequoia and Kings Canyon.
- The need of schools--especially those serving English-language learners and low-income students--for standards-based curriculum that connects in-class learning to out-of-class experiences in real and meaningful ways in an effort to strengthen the social and economic well-being of Sierra Nevada communities.
- The need of Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks and their surrounding communities, in the face of increasingly grave threats posed by a declining water supply, poor air quality, and global climate change, for an engaged and empowered constituency committed to addressing these problems.

Sequoia Parks Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, raises funds to support much-needed projects and programs in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks—which receive over 1.5 million visitors annually. With support from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, RITC will reach and engage an underserved constituency, creating a new generation of Park supporters--and environmental stewards of the greater Sierra Nevada Region.